

Office Ergonomics

Work Habits

- Take short and frequent breaks throughout the day to reduce fatigue.
- Frequently change body positions while working.
- Provide eyes with vision breaks every hour.
- Stretch frequently throughout the day, focusing on areas that are tense.

Posture

- Keep your head balanced over your shoulders. Your ears should line up with your shoulders.
- Sit in the back of the chair.
- Generally, your thighs should be parallel to the floor, creating a 90 degree angle for your hips and legs. If you prefer, raise your chair a little so that your hips are slightly higher than your knees.
- Feet should be flat on the floor or supported on a footrest.
- Shoulders and arms should be relaxed and at 90 degrees when typing.

Chair

- The best adjustability means:
 1. The arms move up and down; in and out and should not be in your way when you are typing or reaching for things.
 2. The seat pan moves forward or back to better fit all heights of employees.
 3. The height of the chair allows you to adjust your chair height so that your legs are at a 90 degree angle, and your feet are flat on the floor or on a foot rest.
 4. The back of the chair should adjust up and down; forward and back and provide good lumbar support that fits in the curve of your lower back.
 5. The chair has a tilt feature that allows you to adjust the angle of the seat pan.
- Adjust your seat pan so that there is 2-3" (roughly a fist) of space between the seat and the back of your knees.
- Adjust your chair periodically to prevent cylinders from drying out.

Keyboard

- Keyboard should be at approximately elbow height.
- Arms should be at a relaxed 90 degree angle while typing.
- Shoulders should be relaxed and not raised.
- Wrists should be in line with forearms and not bent upward or downward.
- Keep keyboard flat. If there are legs on the back of the keyboard, fold them in so that you keyboard will lay flat.
- Use a wrist rest if needed.
- There are many styles of keyboards. No one keyboard is best for all people.

Keyboard Tray

- Trays may be helpful if you cannot lower the keyboard height or if you need a negative tilt. A negative tilt means that the keyboard tilts downward away from you (so the top row of numbers are lower than the space bar).
- If using a keyboard tray, make sure that the mouse fits next to the keyboard. Avoid trays that require you to reach further away.
- Make sure the tray is easy to adjust and slides in and out easily.
- Trays may create ergonomic issues such as increased reaching, awkward positions, etc.

Mouse

- Keep wrist flat, not flexed up or down.
- Keep mouse close to maintain a 90 degree angle while mousing.
- Increase your mouse speed so that it moves and clicks more easily.
- Use a mouse rest if needed.
- There are many styles of mice. The best mouse for you fits your hand comfortably and is easy to maneuver.

Monitor

- Monitor should generally be about an arm's length away or 18-28" from the eyes. The newer models are bigger and easier to see so many people prefer them to be a little further away.
- Eye level should be in the top quarter of your monitor.
- Use monitor risers or a ream of paper if you need to raise your monitor.
- The screen should not have excessive glare.
- If you wear bifocals or trifocals you should be able to look at the monitor without tilting your head. You may need your monitor lower to prevent tilting your head upward.

Phone

- Don't "scrunch" the phone between your head and shoulder. Hold the receiver.
- Use a headset or speaker phone.

Worksurface

- The keyboard and mouse should be located directly in front of you.
- A copy holder that fits between your monitor and keyboard is preferable to one that sets off to the side of the monitor.
- There should be enough room on your work surface for your paperwork and computer accessories. Most frequently used items should be easy to reach.
- Keep arms from resting on hard or square edges.
- There should be at least two inches of space between your desk and the top of your thighs.

Laptops

- Dock laptop whenever possible to avoid tilting head down.
- Use external mouse and keyboard for more adjustability.

Additional Information

- Clutter creates ergonomic issues because it may lead to bad body mechanics such as twisting, lack of leg space, over-reaching, etc.
- Stand and walk at least once an hour.
- Stretch and exercise regularly to keep flexibility and strength.
- Drink half of your body weight in ounces of water every day. For example, a 200 pound person should drink 100 ounces of water per day. For every ounce of caffeine you drink, offset it with another ounce of water.